

Hawaii MARINE LIFESTYLES

HAWAII MARINE B SECTION

SEPTEMBER 21, 2007



Isaac Olivera, tour guide, Princeville Ranch Adventures, secures a tour-goer's rappel harness before sending her down a zipline.



Rich Fater, a tour guide with Princeville Ranch Adventures, demonstrates sliding across a zipline during a tour.



Fater picks strawberry guava for tourists to sample. The fruit, originally from coastal areas of eastern Brazil, is in season in September.

Seen one,
seen 'em all



or so you would think...

Story and Photos by
Ken Griffin

Managing Editor

KAPA'A, Hawaii — Kauai's scenic countryside is literally just a short hop away from Oahu, but a visit here feels millions of miles away from Honolulu's hustle and bustle.

Oahu has its charms, with a healthy mix of aloha and big city flavor. But you've surely wondered what Oahu might have looked like before the bulk of skyscrapers and concrete made its way ashore.

You can satisfy that curiosity by spending a relaxing, adventurous weekend on the Garden Isle. Service members visiting or stationed on Oahu might find Kauai an ideal getaway, or a "vacation within a vacation," as one tourist put it.

"Kauai was the last leg of my island adventure, and was by far my favorite part of the islands," said traveler Shannon O'Dell, visiting from Albuquerque, N.M. "I love the Big Island and Oahu, but I'm so thankful I had the chance to visit this place - and it was the perfect way to end my trip"

One interesting fact O'Dell pointed out (between giggles) was that she saw hundreds of brightly hued wild chickens during her Kauai trip. The unavoidable birds are testament to just how country the island truly is, and if nothing else, provide plenty of free entertainment as they peck around in large groups.

Entertainment here runs from free to cheap to moderately expensive, and occasionally gets to levels some might consider ridiculous. But regardless of your budget, you'll be hard-pressed to run out of things to do.

If you prefer tours and activity agents, you can put one of Kauai's many travel experts to work for you.

"We pretty much have something for everyone here," said Melanie Wright, an activity specialist with Kauai Activity Wholesalers. "A lot of people show up and aren't sure about their options, so we help them out and make sure they have a good time."

Wright recommends one of the many helicopter tours to get the proverbial birds-eye view of the island, but one of her favorite suggestions is the "adventurous - but - safe Zip 'n Dip" expedition offered by Princeville Ranch Adventures, located near the Hanalei River.

For a reasonable price, knowledgeable guides fit you with a rappel harness and truck you into the hills where you'll zip along cables hundreds of feet above valleys and streams. It's an exciting way to cover a

great deal of area in a short period of time, and between zips the guides lead you to a cool-water swimming hole and waterfall for a swim while they prepare hippyish-yet-tasty lunch of pitas, fruits and vegetables (To the guides' defense, the pitas did include meat and they even offered cookies).

"The zip tour is a good opportunity to view wild tourists in their natural habitat," said Rich Fater, a tour guide at Princeville Ranch. "You start out on an easy zip line and work your way up to some more exciting lines."

Fater is originally from the Virgin Islands, but is a bit reminiscent of the Jamaican characters on the old TV show "In Living Color," with a list of interesting, colorful jobs. He's a photographer, a massage therapist, a tour guide, and on top of that he gave up a lucrative career in the financial sector so that he could live and pursue an endless summer in beautiful Kauai. It's hard to blame him, as you're zipping 30 miles per hour, 400 feet in the air, past endless acres of lush greenery, all of which Fater calls "my office."

For the adventurous do-it-yourselfers out there, you can break away from the crowd and visit Kayak Kauai, located in Hanalei. They're one of the few outfitters located on the water willing to rent equipment without a guide.

Another opportunity for adventurous souls is an 11 to 12-mile hike along Kauai's Na Pali Coast. Located on the north shore, it's a demanding daylong haul for the more experienced, diehard hikers out there. The payoff has been thousands of years in the making: magnificent mountains, canyons carved by wind, rain and waves, and rare wildlife. Birdwatchers can view red-footed boobies, the Laysan albatross and the amazing "great frigate" bird with its 8-foot wingspan.

Finding a savvy local is usually the best way to have a good time without breaking the bank. Fater, from the zip-line tour, is happy to help out, so if you stop by Princeville Ranch make sure you pick his brain.

"The Na Pali hike is cheap to do, and just amazing," Fater said. "It's a bit treacherous, but it's actually life changing . . . I'll never forget it. High winds, tall cliffs and huge crashing waves during the winter all add to the adventure."

Some of the can't-miss activities here include visiting the Grand Canyon-like Waimea Canyon, and the center-island "wettest place on earth" Mt. Waialeale. With an average of more than 472 inches of rain each year, it makes for a muddy but interesting visit. Last but not least, make sure you visit the famous Kauai beaches and harbors. Although there's excellent fishing, sailing and more, all of the aforementioned to-dos are unique to the Garden Isle.

With the new Super Ferry service set to begin service to Kauai, right now might be an opportune time to plan a trip. One clear advantage is a cheap trip, not to mention arriving with your own vehicle.

Otherwise, you can find affordable travel packages aboard Marine Corps Base Hawaii's International Tickets and Tours Office. An ITT travel agent will gladly help service members and other authorized patrons find the best rates and score package travel deals.

So, looking for something fun to do? At this point, you're out of excuses. Call the Super Ferry, or search local airlines' discount fares. It seems they're always on sale, thanks to "price wars" caused by new competition. Start your island hopping campaign this weekend, and return to work Monday with interesting stories and recharged batteries.



Tourists from California enjoy a refreshing dip in a mountain stream in the Hanalei area of Kauai. The swimming hole is a daily stop on Princeville Ranch Adventure's "Zip 'n Dip" tour, which includes several zip lines and a quick dip while guides prepare lunch.

Marines on top of fundraiser

Story and Photos by
Christine Cabalo

Photojournalist

Camping out at a Safeway grocery store in Kailua, Hawaii, Marines spent Sept. 13-15 earning money non-stop for the Special Olympics.

Atop a 25-foot scaffold, Marines from the Military Police Department, Marine Corps Base Hawaii, asked shoppers for donations at Aikahi Park Shopping Center. Now in its sixth year in Hawaii, the “Cop on Top” program is one of several annual events sponsored by local law enforcement to raise funds for Special Olympics athletes. It’s a local take on the national “Cop on Shop” fundraiser where police officers sit on doughnut shop roofs and ask shoppers for donations.

The Marine military police officers collected money through Saturday, sleeping on scaffolding and waking up to take collections.

“We brought up a radio,” said Sgt. Bryan Petty, traffic chief, Military Police Department. “We have just the basics: a bullhorn to let people know we’re here and blankets to keep us warm at night.”

During the day, the volunteers sold popcorn, “shave ice” and took turns sitting in a dunking booth to earn money. Shoppers also bought commemorative T-shirts and hats to support the effort.

Civilian and military police officers at 18 locations statewide tried to raise more than \$10,000 at each location. The Marines occupied two of those locations, asking for support from donors at two shopping centers in Kailua.

Sergeant Jared Riske, senior traffic investigator, Military Police Department, said people don’t have to be police officers or in the military to volunteer for fundraising events.

“Whatever time or funds people can donate would be great,” he said. “If you

can donate a smidgeon of time to support the Special Olympics in Hawaii, then it’s more than worth it to do it.”

Working at both locations was difficult, said Riske, and during the slower moments he would see the same set of people who previously donated. Petty said spending the night at the shopping center can get loud because supply trucks make their deliveries in the evenings.

Sergeant Ryan Connor, military police officer, Military Police Department, said he had fun watching so many people go through the store and being in the dunking booth when he needed to cool down.

Relying only on donations, Special Olympics Hawaii sponsors sporting events for intellectually disabled athletes. Riske said the organization needs volunteers throughout the year to mentor athletes or referee games.

“I know the Special Olympics coordinators can’t get enough of people who can spend time with the athletes,” he said. “Once you volunteer, you can get e-mail alerts about other opportunities to help out.”

The MPs regularly support the organization’s fundraisers, including running in the 2007 Law Enforcement Torch Run with members of 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment.

The MPs are already looking for volunteers to help coordinate the next annual fundraiser for the Special Olympics. The volunteers will take part in “Fueling Dreams To Serve and Protect,” giving their time to pump gasoline for donations to the organization.

“We’d love volunteers for anything,” Riske said. “We all want to do it to help the Special Olympics. The point of volunteering is raising awareness in addition to raising money.”

For more information about volunteering, call the Military Police Department at 257-1146 or log on to <http://www.specialolympichawaii.org>.



Corporal Heidi Akers, military police officer, announces for donations using a bullhorn at Aikahi Park Shopping Center. The “Cop on Top” fundraiser is a three-day event, where police officers collect funds for the Special Olympics by camping out near Safeway grocery stores.



Raising funds for Special Olympics, Sgt. Bryan Petty, (left) and Sgt. Ryan Connor from the Military Police Department make fresh popcorn and shave ice. A dunking booth was available for donors to sink one of the Marines during the fundraiser.



Danica Hammer (left) and Candace Iposom, tellers from Bank of Hawaii, operate one of the fundraising booths Sept. 14 to support Special Olympics Hawaii. Police officers in 18 locations statewide each attempt to raise \$10,000 to help the intellectually disabled.

MOVIE TIME

Prices: Friday and Saturday 7:15 p.m., shows are \$3 for adults and \$1.50 for children. Sunday matinee is shown at 2 p.m. Shows are \$2 for adults and \$1 for children. Evening showings on Sunday and Wednesday are at 6:30 p.m. and late shows are shown Friday and Saturday at 9:45 p.m. Cost is \$2 for adults and \$1.50 for children.

For ticket pricing, the Base Theater Box Office defines an adult as a patron 12 and older and defines a child as a patron from 6 to 11. Children 5 and younger are admitted free of charge. Parents must purchase tickets for R-rated movies in person at the box office for children 16 and younger. Patrons must present their military identification card when purchasing tickets. Call 254-7642 for recorded information.

Sneak Preview Policy: One hour and 45 minutes prior to the movie, tickets will be issued to first priority patrons waiting in line, then second and third priority patrons.

In an effort to prevent piracy, the following security measures will be enforced on base for sneak preview screenings: bag checks, confiscation of cameras or cell phones with picture taking capability (items will be returned after screening), magnetometer wand, audience scanning with night vision goggles during screening.

The Base Theater and film companies thank you in advance for your cooperation and hope you will enjoy the show. For recorded information, call the Base Theater at 254-7642.

The Bourne Ultimatum (PG-13)	Today at 7:15 p.m.
Rescue Dawn (PG-13)	Today at 9:45 p.m.
Sneak Preview of The Game Plan (PG)	Saturday at 7 p.m.
Hot Rod (PG-13)	Saturday at 9:45 p.m.
Underdog (PG)	Sunday at 2 p.m.
Rescue Dawn (PG-13)	Sunday at 6:30 p.m.
No Reservations (PG)	Wednesday at 6:30 p.m.
Stardust (PG-13)	Friday at 7:15 p.m.
Hot Rod (PG-13)	Friday at 9:45 p.m.

Book review: ‘Things Fall Apart’



Sgt. Sara A. Carter
Community Relations NCO

Chinua Achebe’s Things Fall Apart is a brilliant story of an African man named Okonkwo, whose life is consumed with the fear of being perceived as weak, and his village that begins to fall apart as missionaries from England come and push their religion and government on the villagers.

Okonkwo’s biggest fear was being like his father. His father, Unoka, was poor, owed everyone in the village money when he died and during life he was free-spirited and believed “that whenever he saw a dead man’s

mouth he saw the folly of not eating what one had in one’s lifetime.” Okonkwo vowed to never be like him.

He spent his entire life working hard on his farm and was incredibly successful. He was respected throughout all of the villages. None of his fellow villagers thought he was like his father because he never openly expressed his true feeling and was considered to be a very firm, strong man.

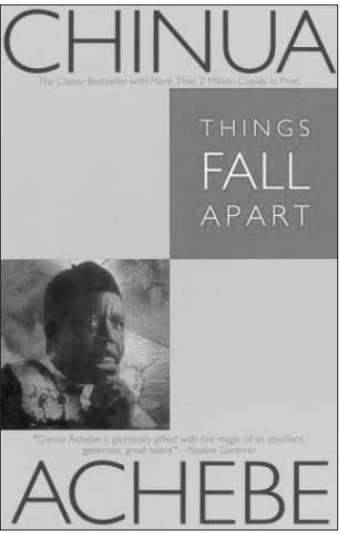
Umuofia, Okonkwo’s village, and the nine surrounding villages lived what they thought was a peaceful existence until the “white man” came bringing his religion and government. The once content villagers began to listen to the missionaries’ new thoughts and ideas and started to question their own religion. With that, their village began to fall apart.

Achebe’s book is full of every human emotion possible; love, hate, despair, hope, confusion and many more. Although most of us have never lived the lives of the villagers or the missionaries we can still relate our lives to what they went

through or how they felt.

Because the plot takes place in an African community Achebe infuses African words, which are hard to pronounce and understand, into a book that is written in English. However, he provides a dictionary in the back explaining what each word means making it completely understandable for anyone who reads it.

This is an amazing, easy read for anyone who has a couple of hours on their hands. This story is sure to get you thinking about your life and the world we live in.



Movie review: ‘Balls of Fury’



Lance Cpl. Regina A. Ruisi
Combat Correspondent

Editor’s note: Hawaii Marine’s combat correspondents provide readers with in-depth reviews and unbiased ratings of films currently in theaters or past releases and classics.

The rating system requires some explanation before you get started.

If the film is currently available for rent or purchase it will be assigned a certain number of “microwaves” on a scale of one to five to rate its “reheat factor.”

If the film is in theaters, it will be assigned a certain number of service stripes on a scale from one to five.

In other words, the more microwaves or service stripes the film receives, the better and more entertaining it is to watch.

 **Rating: 3 out of 5 service stripes**

I have to admit, I have a guilty pleasure for parody movies. It originated when I was young and my mom had me watching Mel Brooks movies like “Young Frankenstein” and “Robin Hood: Men in

Tights.” Recent favorites include horror movie spoofs like “Shaun of the Dead” and cop-movie spoofs like “Hot Fuzz.” I always find parodies to be clever in their humor, taking stereotypes for certain categories of movies and showing how absolutely ridiculous they are.

“Balls of Fury” did all but fall short for poking fun at martial arts films. The film applies all the martial arts movie stereotypes to ping-pong, a risky venture, but the final product was entertaining. But with a cast like Christopher Walken, James Hong and Dan Fogler it’s almost impossible not to have a few laughs.

The movie begins with the humiliation of Randy Daytona (Fogler) in the 1988 Olympic pingpong championships. His career is finished, and he is doomed to work as an entertainer at dive of a restaurant in Reno. When the FBI needs him for an undercover mission, he is thrust back into pingpong culture. When he finds himself a little rusty, he endures intensive training by a pingpong legend, Wong (Hong), and his ever-so-sexy pingpong protégé niece, Maggie (Maggie Q).

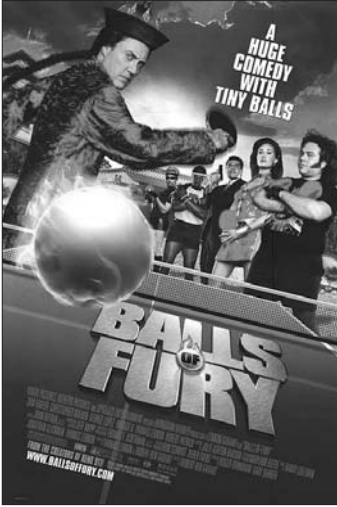
After discovering his inner pingpong master, Daytona is invited to attend a secret tournament hosted by criminal mastermind Feng (Walken). Daytona agrees only because Feng is responsible for killing Daytona’s father after the doomed Olympic match. The “sudden death” tournament lives up to its name, snuffing out player after player as the games progress.

The movie begins with lots

of laughs, but they eventually lessen. A martial arts movie buff may have found it more entertaining, but I found that the movie transposed from spoof-like humor into physical humor, sucking all the intellect out of the script. The writing dried up in the beginning and the plot seemed to be carried by the actor’s abilities.

Walken lived up to his character acting with the roll of Feng. He plays a former, promising student of Wong’s turned criminal genius, and he keeps audiences rolling with a brand of humor only he could produce. The movie is mainly dependant on newcomer Fogler, who seems to be starting a promising comedy career. Hong steals every scene that he appears in as a blind pingpong master, who seems like a direct rip off of Mr. Miyagi.

The movie was entertaining and worth paying the \$7.50 to see at the theater once, and only once. It doesn’t live up to the hype, but it’s a movie to see with friends when you’re looking for a few laughs and nothing particularly mind boggling.



October
13-14 2007
MCBH, Kaneohe Bay

Blues on the Bay
Air Show

With the
Blue Angels

“Preferred Seating” Ticket Pricing

GRANDSTAND			
Ticket Prices	Advance (Now - Oct. 13)	On-Site (Oct. 13 - 14)	
Adult(11yrs & up)	\$8.00	\$10.00	
Child (3yrs – 10 yrs)	\$5.00	\$ 7.00	
BOX SEATS			
Ticket Prices	Advance (Now - Oct. 13)	On-Site (Oct. 13 - 14)	
Adult (11Years old and up)	\$15.00	\$20.00	
Child (3-10 Years old)	\$11.00	\$13.00	
CHALETS			
Top Brass Chalet	Advance	Advance	On-Site
Ticket Prices	(Now – Sep. 30)	(Oct. 1 - 12)	(Oct. 13 - 14)
Adult(11yrs & up)	\$70.00	\$80.00	\$80.00
Child (3yrs – 10 yrs)	\$50.00	\$60.00	\$60.00
Devil Dog Chalet			
Ticket Prices	Advance	Advance	On-Site
	(Now – Sep. 30)	(Oct. 1 - 12)	(Oct. 13 - 14)
Adult(11yrs & up)	\$45.00	\$55.00	\$55.00
Child (3yrs – 10 yrs)	\$35.00	\$45.00	\$45.00

*Tickets are available at ITT or through Ticketmaster. Every seat requires a ticket. Children's prices apply to children ages 3 to 11; children ages 2 and under are FREE if sitting in an adult's lap. Stroller parking is available in a designated area behind the grandstands. Strollers and baby carriers are not permitted in the grandstand seating area.

Oct. 12 is military day where service members and their families can enjoy a sneak peek at the aircraft and the full airshow performance.

BEFORE YOU TAKE IT OFF,
THINK ABOUT HOW WELL IT FITS.

U.S. MARINES

The uniform represents more than 231 years of history and tradition. It's the identity worn by the courageous and honorable since the Revolutionary War. Earned through discipline, hard work and dedication. Respected by all. Keep your uniform on and continue making history. See your Prior Service Recruiter about the many benefits and opportunities with the Marine Corps Reserve or call 1.800.MARINES or visit MARINES.COM.

ONCE A MARINE. ALWAYS A MARINE.

 MARINE RESERVE

SPOTLIGHT ON BASE

On the Menu

at Anderson Hall

Friday <i>Lunch</i> Oven roast beef Baked tuna & noodles Steamed rice French fried cauliflower Vegetable combo Brown gravy Chilled horseradish Banana coconut cream pie Chocolate chip cookies Carrot cake Cream cheese frosting Vanilla/chocolate cream pudding Lime/strawberry gelatin <i>Specialty bar: Deli</i> <i>Dinner</i> Sauerbraten Baked knockwurst w/sauerkraut Scalloped potatoes Noodles Jefferson Green beans w/mushrooms Creole summer squash Brown gravy <i>Desserts: Same as lunch</i>	Vanilla/chocolate cream pudding Strawberry/orange gelatin Monday <i>Lunch</i> Teriyaki chicken Salisbury steak Mashed potatoes Steamed rice Simmered carrots Simmered lima beans Brown gravy Pumpkin pie Chocolate cookies Easy choc. cake w/chocolate butter cream frosting Vanilla/chocolate cream pudding Raspberry/strawberry gelatin <i>Specialty bar: Pasta</i> <i>Dinner</i> Roast turkey Oven roast beef Pork fried rice Parsley buttered potatoes Green beans w/mushrooms Simmered corn Brown gravy <i>Desserts: Same as lunch</i>	Brown gravy <i>Desserts: Same as lunch</i> Wednesday <i>Lunch</i> Baked ham Chili macaroni Candied sweet potatoes Grilled cheese sandwich French fried okra Cauliflower au gratin Pineapple sauce Bread pudding w/lemon sauce Peanut butter brownie Banana cake w/butter cream frosting Vanilla/chocolate cream pudding Orange/raspberry gelatin <i>Specialty bar: Hot dog & sausage</i> <i>Dinner</i> Baked stuffed pork chops Turkey pot pie Calico corn Simmered peas and carrots Steamed rice Mashed potatoes Brown gravy
Saturday <i>Dinner</i> Grilled T-bone steak Pork chops Mexicana Mashed potatoes Spanish rice Mexican corn Peas & mushrooms Brown gravy Cheesecake w/cherry topping Fruit nut bars Chocolate/vanilla cream pudding Lemon/raspberry gelatin Yellow cake	Tuesday <i>Lunch</i> Sweet Italian sausage Veal parmesan Cheese ravioli Spaghetti noodles Simmered asparagus Italian blend vegetables Meat sauce Strawberry glazed cream pie Brownies Devil's food cake w/mocha butter-cream frosting Vanilla/chocolate cream pudding Cherry/lime gelatin <i>Specialty bar: Taco</i> <i>Dinner</i> Swiss steak with tomato sauce Lemon baked fish Lyonnaise potatoes Steamed rice Southern style green beans Vegetable combo	Thursday <i>Lunch</i> Cantonese spareribs Baked tuna & noodles Shrimp fried rice Corn on the cob Club spinach Corn bread dressing Brown gravy Lemon chiffon pie Snicker-doodle cookies German chocolate cake Vanilla/chocolate cream pudding Lime/strawberry gelatin <i>Specialty bar: Southern meal</i> Dinner Swedish meatballs Caribbean chicken breast Steamed rice Paprika butter potatoes Simmered brussels sprouts Simmered summer squash Chicken gravy <i>Desserts: Same as lunch</i>
Sunday <i>Dinner</i> Beef pot pie Baked ham Baked macaroni & cheese Club spinach Cauliflower au gratin Cream gravy Bread pudding w/lemon sauce Vanilla cream pie Vanilla cookies Pineapple upside-down cake		

Blues on the Bay

Air Show

October 13-14, 2007

Military Day is Oct. 12

MCBH Kaneohe Bay

with the



Blue Angels

Word to Pass

Benjamin Parker Elementary School Annual Benji Fair

Benjamin Parker Elementary School in Kaneohe holds its annual Benji Fair today from 2:30 to 6:30 p.m. in the school courtyard. The fair includes food, games and a variety of bouncey houses for keiki and parents to enjoy. All are invited to attend. For more information, call 233-5686.

Women's Health Education Day

There will be a Women's Health Education Day today. The full day of lectures, demonstrations and exhibits is from 8:30 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. at the Hickam Air Force Base Community Center. Lt. Andrew Baldwin, Medical Corps, U.S. Navy, kicks off the day's events. Topics include: metabolism and weight management, cancer prevention and detection, stress management and exercise demonstrations. The event is limited to the first 200 people, and you must have registered by Sept. 19. Lunch will be provided compliments of TriWest Healthcare Alliance. For more information, call 433-6875.

Windward Hoolaulea

The Windward Hoolaulea is Saturday from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. at Windward Community College in Kaneohe. It is a grassroots, non-profit effort coordinated by Windward Community College and the Kaneohe Business Group, with participation from volunteers, students, businesses and organizations. The annual event showcases local entertainers, a book sale, activities for the keiki, island crafters, ethnic food and community booths. For more information, call Brian Richardson at 236-9224.

Children's Story Time

All MCBH children and sponsored guests can enjoy a fun-filled hour of stories and crafts Thursday mornings from 10 to 11a.m. at the Base Library. For more information, call 254-7624.

Blue Angels to Perform

The Blue Angels are performing here at the 2007 Kaneohe Marine Corps-Navy Air Show "Blues on the Bay," Oct. 13-14. The U.S. Navy's Blue Angels Flight Demonstration Squadron will perform with other military and civilian aviation acts. Service members and their family members can catch the show early Oct. 12 for "Military Day." For more information, call 371-2804 or visit <http://www.mcbh.usmc.mil/Airshow/>.

MARINE MAKEPONO
HAWAIIAN FOR "MARINE BARGAINS"

AUTOS

2006 Limited Edition Hyundai Azera. White with black leather interior, 9,500 miles, 10-year warranty, \$28,500 or best offer. Call 864-5656 or 864-9024.

2005 BMW 330CiC convertible. 16K miles, tan/sanora, tan leather interior, excellent condition, full warranty until 2009, premium package, navigation, xenon lights, \$39,950. Call 257-8835.

2002 Saturn I200. One owner, 4 cylinder, power windows and locks, a/c, alarm, 75K miles, must sell, \$4,700 OBO. Call 779-3555.

2001 BMW 530i. 65K miles, a/c, leather interior, power, lots of extras. \$12,500 OBO. Call 779-5930.

1991 Mazda 4x4. Island truck. Call 358-9899 or 232-1567.

FOR RENT

Palm Villas in Ewa Beach. Two bedroom, 1.5 bathroom, ground floor unit, pets allowed with deposit, water, maintenance and association fees included, red-bricked lanai. \$1,850 per month. Call 864-5656.

WANTED

Housecleaner. Needed approximately one day per week for home on base. \$15 per hour. Call 284-5338.

Mentors. Looking for two mentors, one surf mentor for an 11 year old and a guitar mentor for a 15 year old. Call 224-2172 or 226-5216.

YARD SALE

Saturday. 2667-A Dias Place on base. 8 a.m. to 1 p.m..

Ads are accepted from active duty and retired military personnel, their family members and MCB Hawaii civil service employees. Ads are free and will appear in two issues of Hawaii Marine, on a space-available basis. Those interested in advertising must bring a valid DoD-issued ID to the Hawaii Marine Office.

Makepono may be used only for non-commercial classified ads containing items of personal property.

Forms may be filled out Monday through Friday between 7:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. at the MCB Hawaii Public Affairs Office located in Building 216, room 19, aboard Marine Corps Base, Kaneohe Bay.



Sears: Family man, master sergeant, maybe even mayor

Story and Photo by
Lance Cpl. Regina A. Ruisi

Combat Correspondent

A quick look around Master Sgt. Antonio M. Sears’ office in the administration office of 3rd Marine Regiment and you can tell a lot about what kind of man he is.

All over the walls are Marine Corps recruiting posters, pictures from schools and training he’s completed, University of Florida Gators’ merchandise, and pictures of his family. It’s evident, without even meeting the 40-year old Marine, what’s important to him.

“I plan on staying in the Marine Corps until they kick me out,” he said with a smile. “I didn’t plan on it at first, but coming to the regiment here and being in direct contact with deployed Marines has changed my mind. I still think I can make an impact on the Corps and the Marines by staying in.”

Sears shipped off for boot camp July 28, 1985, after deciding the Corps was the right path for him.

“When it came time to decide if I wanted to go to college or not, the decision was easy,” he said. “My mom couldn’t afford for me to go to school. She raised me to be self sufficient, so I sought out what was best for me.”

After seeing a Marine Corps recruiter in his uniform, Sears knew that what he had to do.

“I saw the recruiter in the uniform and I saw all of the girls’ reactions,” he jokes. “He had a nice car and a brief case that he always carried around, and I said to myself, ‘I can do that.’”

When he finally enlisted, the recruiter asked him what job he wanted to have. When he asked “can’t I do what you do?” the recruiter gave him the second closest job: administration.

Sears left his hometown of Daytona Beach, Fla., for boot camp at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island. After graduating boot camp, he went to Personnel Administration School at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton. He was stationed at Iwakuni, Japan, where he was meritoriously promoted to corporal in July, 1986. From there he went to Headquarters, United States Marine Corps at Henderson Hall, Washington, D.C., for three years.

He was promoted to sergeant and sent to 6th Marine Corps District, Atlanta, Georgia. He also served in Okinawa, Japan, Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., Port Au Prince, Haiti, and Camp Johnson, N.C.

Sears finally got his chance to be a recruiter in 1998, when he went to Recruiting Station Orlando, Fla.

“I enjoyed recruiting duty,” he said. “It was harder than I thought it was going to be. The work hours made me want to come back to the fleet, though. When you’re a recruiter, you’re at the mercy of the applicants. It was rewarding to know that I was helping young people shape their futures.”

After three years of recruiting duty, Sears returned to Camp Lejeune, this time to serve as class commander for Personnel Administration and Legal Services School. He taught new Marines in administration and legal military occupational specialties. This billet was his favorite one while serving

in the Marine Corps, he said.

“I had just come off recruiting duty, so admin school was a sanity check for me,” he laughed. “It reminded me of why I was a Marine. It reaffirmed my belief in the Corps. I got to work with Marines who were right out of boot camp, so I was around Marines, not civilians. You get to see the effect that senior Marines have on them, and you know that you’re helping shape the kind of Marine they’re going to be.”

Sears came to Marine Corps Base Hawaii in 2005 to serve with 3rd Marine Regiment. Although he has never deployed to a combat zone, he recognizes the role he plays on the home front is important for the deployed Marines. In addition to supporting deployed Marines, he supports 3rd Marine Regiment’s families as the Regimental Family Readiness officer. His recent promotion to regimental administration chief allows him to play a bigger part in the lives of Marines.

“I support deployed Marines, that’s my job,” he said. “Even if I’m not deployed, I’m closely tied to the units that go and I get to support those Marines. I get to make sure they and their families are taken care of. My crusade has been to improve the quality of admin to achieve mission accomplishment and let the families know that we’re here to take care of them.”

Sears leaves Oct. 16 for the Pentagon, where he will serve as administrative chief, United States Marine Corps Office of Legislative Affairs. He said the sixth anniversary of Sept. 11 made the job seem even more important, reminding him that the Pentagon is an important place for the Department of Defense. Because his 17-year old son, Christopher, finishes up high school this school year, Sears and his wife, Mary Ann, decided she, Christopher and daughter Danielle, 14, will stay in Hawaii until Christopher graduates.

“It’s going to make for a long time apart,” he said. “I consider this my deployment because I never got to go to Iraq.”

To serve as a positive role model for his children’s education, Sears has plans on attending college and getting a bachelors degree. The degree will also help fulfill personal goals of his.

“Getting a degree was something I promised my mom,” Spears said. “It was how I got her okay to join the Marine Corps. If I accomplish that, then I’m making true on that promise to her.”

Sears also wants to use his degree to help him run for mayor of Daytona Beach. He has been active in Daytona Beach politics and elections, sending in absentee ballots and keeping informed on what’s going on in his hometown.

“You can be in a great little town and not realize how great it is until you leave,” he said of his hometown. “When you’re gone, you realize what’s good about it. I always knew my calling was Daytona Beach.”

With big goals and accomplishments, Sears still finds time to have fun. He spends Saturdays golfing with his wife and enjoys attending church with his family.

“It’s important to have goals and accom-

plish them,” he said, advising young service members to work for what they want in life. “It’s okay to have fun, but I believe you’ll have more fun accomplishing those goals so you won’t have any regrets. It’s important to have a balance in life. At the end of the day, the goal is to sleep well at night, and accomplishing your goals will help ease your mind. Don’t make unrealistic goals for yourself, know you’re strengths and weaknesses. If you’re a Marine, you’re a whole lot better off than most Americans because you’re in an organization that’s goal oriented. Build on the core values the Corps has instilled in you. They’re tools for success.”

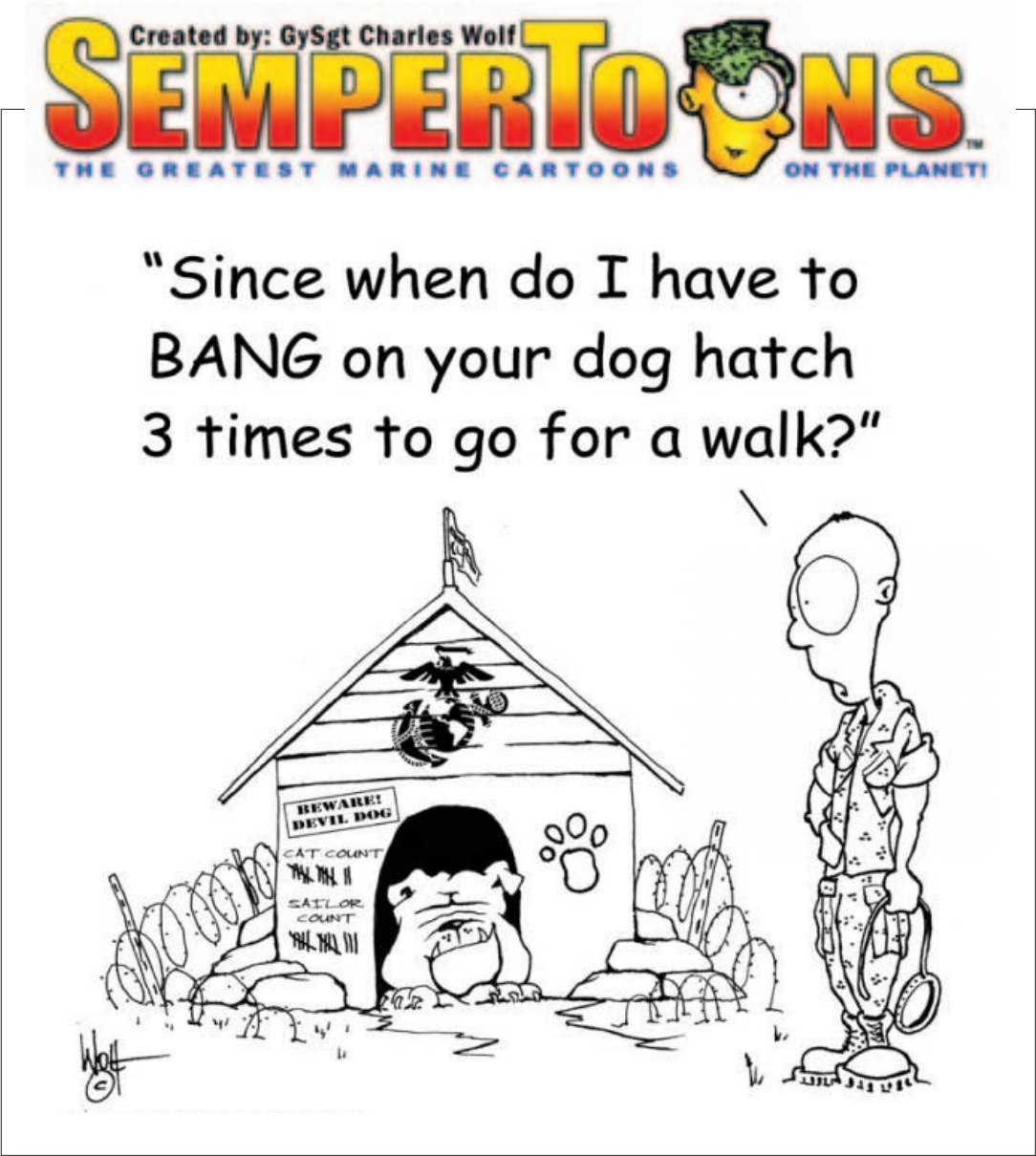
Sears doesn’t take complete credit for all his achievements. He recognizes the leadership he had throughout his career helped make him the success he is today.

“I was lucky, I had great leadership who pushed me to get ahead, so they’ve been a blessing on my career, and that’s what I hope to do for young Marines,” he said. “I’ve been blessed to work with good people who have

taught me a lot, but I’m still willing to learn more. You won’t always know what to expect in life, but you should always strive for more. I want to make an impact wherever I go. I want to make a difference in the lives of Marines.”



Master Sgt. Antonio M. Sears will serve as administration chief, USMC Office of Legislative Affairs, as of Oct. 16.





Around the Corps

Explore 2008 enlisted to officer programs

Lance Cpl. Michael R. Stevens

MCAS Miramar

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION MIRAMAR, Calif. —

The dates for the 2008 fiscal year enlisted-to-commissioning program selection boards and the officer candidate school dates aligned with these boards were announced recently in MarAdmin 526/07.

The message outlines the deadlines and board dates for Marines appearing on Enlisted Commissioning Program boards, Meritorious Commissioning Program boards, Meritorious Commissioning Program – Reserve boards and the Reserve Enlisted Commissioning Program selection boards.

For Marines dreaming about taking the step, the Corps offers these enlisted-to-commissioning programs and the Marine Enlisted Commissioning Education Program, known as MECEP.

All active-duty Marines who meet specific eligibility requirements can apply for MECEP, according to Marine Corps Order 1560.15L.

When evaluating an individual’s potential for commissioned service, board members review the applicant’s service record, previous academic record, and evidence of career and academic self-improvement during their time as an enlisted Marine.

In deciding which commissioning program to pursue, the applicant’s education level is the primary determining factor.

“To apply for ECP, they have to have earned a bache-

lor’s level degree from an accredited college or university prior to applying for the program,” said Lt. Col. Keith M. Cutler, commanding officer, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron. “For MECEP and all other programs, one has not yet completed college.”

MECEP Marines must attend a school with a directly-affiliated Naval ROTC detachment.

Program benefits include the chance to attend school full time while maintaining active-duty status and pay.

“We encourage preparatory courses if we feel the Marine could benefit from them,” Cutler said. “If we interview a Marine and discover he has already completed several semesters of school successfully, we’d feel confident they wouldn’t need to attend MECEP prep or BOOST.”

Marines can attend the Broadened Opportunity for Officer Selection and Training program, or BOOST, prior to attending college courses. The program focuses on preparatory training for the adjustment to college-level classes.

The school, located at Newport, R.I., hones Marines’ knowledge of math, science and necessary literacy skills to help them compete successfully in college courses.

Before applying to any of the programs, Marines must submit a package and appear on a selection board.

“For H&HS, the Marines who submit packages to become commissioned appear in front of a board, usually consisting of three officers, to

gauge their thoughts, motivations, and determine how competitive they will be,” Cutler said. “The board will discuss their thoughts on the applicant and then submit their recommendations to the commanding officer before he meets with them.”

Other squadrons do something similar to this in their officer selection process.

“As long as a Marine meets the requirements for the program, I’ll meet with them,” Cutler said.

A package consists of a copy of the Marine’s service record book, letters of recommendation from Marines who know them in a professional manner and training and achievement records.

“The impressions from the Marine’s senior-enlisted advisors and officers in charge are important in the selection process,” Cutler said. “They work with the Marine daily and know their strengths and weaknesses and can make first-hand comments on their personality and work ethic.”

“It’s a serious thing. You want to be sure it’s the route you want to take and prepare yourself adequately,” said Cutler, giving advice on making the decision to pursue a commission.

In the event that, once accepted to a commissioning program, the Marine does not complete the training required to earn their commission, they return to the fleet at the rank and in the occupational specialty they had before going into the commissioning program.



Courtesy photo

2nd Lt. Penny Surdukan rose through the enlisted ranks to staff sergeant in 2004, at which point she was accepted to the MECEP program.